

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LONDON 06371 01 OF 03 201212Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----201214Z 024682 /10

O R 201138Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2828
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 LONDON 06371

EXDIS

FOR EMBASSY CAPE TOWN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, RH, UK
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: OWEN'S PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS ON NEXT
STEPS

SUMMARY: 1) OWEN IS INCLINED TO ESTABLISHING A LIAISON
OFFICE IN SALISBURY, PERHAPS WITH AN AMERICAN ATTACH-
MENT. THE OFFICE WOULD CONSULT BILATERALLY WITH THE
WHITE COMMUNITY AND, INSIDE AND OUTSIDE RHODESIA, WITH
NATIONALIST LEADERS. THE PROCESS MIGHT EVENTUALLY LEAD
TO A MULTILATERAL NEGOTIATING SESSION IN LIVINGSTONE OR
VICTORIA FALLS WITH A FINAL CONFERENCE AT LANCASTER
HOUSE. HIS THOUGHTS ARE TENTATIVE. 2) OWEN UNDERSTANDS
THE VICE PRESIDENT MAY BE PLANNING A TRIP TO AFRICA.
OWEN WOULD LIKE AN EARLY ANNOUNCEMENT OF A CONSTITUTIONAL
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 LONDON 06371 01 OF 03 201212Z

CONFERENCE AND WOULD THEREFORE PREFER THE ANNOUNCEMENT
PRECEDE A VICE PRESIDENT TRIP. END SUMMARY

1. ON APRIL 19 CHARGE (WITH SEITZ) MET WITH FOREIGN
SECRETARY OWEN, JOHNNY GRAHAM, AND EWEN FERGUSSON TO
DISCUSS OWEN'S THOUGHTS ABOUT HOW BEST TO PROCEED ON
RHODESIA. CHARGE OPENED WITH AN APOLOGY FOR THE CON-

FUSION OVER DAVID AARON'S PLANNED ATTENDANCE AT THE MEETING, EXPLAINING THAT AARON HAD HAD TO SKIP THE EVENING SESSION IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO MEET NEXT DAY'S COMMITMENTS IN WASHINGTON. FERQUSSON EXPRESSED REGRET AT GUARDIAN STORY (LONDON 6283), ADDING THAT KEATLEY WAS A NOTORIOUSLY INACCURATE CORRESPONDENT. CHARGE SAID AARON WOULD PROBABLY BE BACK IN LONDON ON FRIDAY AND ARRANGED APPOINTMENT AT NOON THAT DAY FOR HIM AND AARON TO SEE OWEN. CHARQE THEN EXPRESSED SECRETARY'S APPRECIATION FOR OWEN'S LETTER (STATE 87396 - NOTAL) AND INDICATED REPLY WOULD BE COMING SOON.

2. OWEN DESCRIBED IN GENERAL TERMS HOW HE SAW THE NEXT PHASE OF THE RHODESIAN INITIATIVE UNFOLDING. HE SAID HE BELIEVED HE HAD RECEIVED SERIOUS COMMITMENTS FROM ALL THE PARTIES WITH WHOM HE HAD SPOKEN DURING THE TRIP. HE SAID HE IS INCLINED TO MOVE QUICKLY TO A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT THAT A CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE WILL BE CONVENED, ALTHOUGH THE ANNOUNCEMENT WOULD NOT GO INTO THE DETAILS OF TIME, PLACE, OR PARTICIPATION. OWEN ADDED THAT HE HAD NEARLY DECIDED TO ESTABLISH A BRITISH LIAISON MISSION IN SALISBURY (PERHAPS HEADED BY GRAHAM). THE MISSION WOULD EXPLORE CONSTITUTIONAL IDEAS WITH THE RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT AND BLACK GROUPS INSIDE THE COUNTRY AS WELL AS FLY OUT OF SALISBURY FOR BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS WITH OTHER NATIONALIST DELEGATIONS. IF THESE PRELIMINARY SOUNDINGS ARE PROMISING, THEN PERHAPS SOME SORT OF NEGOTIATING FORUM COULD BE ESTABLISHED IN LIVINGSTONE OR VICTORIA FALLS FOLLOWED EVENTUALLY BY A FORMAL CONSTITUTIONAL

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 LONDON 06371 01 OF 03 201212Z

CONFERENCE AT LANCASTER HOUSE. OWEN SUGGESTED AGAIN, AS HE HAD IN HIS LETTER TO THE SECRETARY, THAT WE MIGHT WANT TO CONSIDER ATTACHING AN AMERICAN OFFICIAL TO THE BRITISH MISSION IN SALISBURY.

3. O SAID SUCH A PROCESS OF CONSULTATIONS, CONCENTRATING ON CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES, COULD BUILD TRUST AMONG THE PARTIES. PERHAPS SUFFICIENT CONSENSUS ON SOME OF THE ISSUES COULD BE DEVELOPED, AND THESE "TECHNICAL" TALKS COULD ISOLATE THE POINTS REQUIRING POLITICAL DECISIONS "AT THE TOP". OWEN SAID HE WOULD BE PREPARED PERSONALLY TO CONDUCT THE SENIOR POLITICAL MEETINGS EITHER IN A SERIES OF BILATERAL CONTACTS OR IN SOME OTHER GROUP ARRANGEMENT. TOP-LEVEL LEADERS OF DELEGATIONS MIGHT BE INVITED TO MAKE SUBMISSIONS BEFORE "INTERROGATION", HE SAID. OWEN HAS NO FIRM VIEW ON US REPRESENTATION AT SUCH MEETINGS BUT SAID HE THOUGHT IT SHOULD BE A FIGURE OF STATURE, PERHAPS A FORMER CABINET MEMBER SIMILAR TO CLARK CLIFFORD.

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 LONDON 06371 02 OF 03 201214Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----201215Z 024693 /10

O R 201138Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2829
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 03 LONDON 06371

EXDIS

4. OWEN THEN SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE WAS CONSIDERING A TRIP TO AFRICA. HE SAID HE WELCOMED THE IDEA. HE WONDERED, HOWEVER, WHETHER WE INTENDED TO DELAY THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF A CONFERENCE UNTIL AFTER THE PROPOSED TRIP. OWEN SAID HE WOULD PREFER TO ANNOUNCE THE CONFERENCE AT THE END OF THIS WEEK, OR THE BEGINNING OF NEXT WEEK, FOLLOWING CABINET CONSIDERATION ON THURSDAY. THE MONDALE TRIP COULD PERHAPS BE INCLUDED AS PART OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT, HE SUGGESTED. HE DOES NOT FEEL STRONGLY ON THIS POINT, HE SAID, BUT BELIEVES AN EARLY, SIMULTANEOUS ANNOUNCEMENT WOULD HAVE THE ADVANTAGE OF MAINTAINING MOMENTUM. MOREOVER, A TRIP BY THE VICE PRESIDENT BEFORE AN ANNOUNCEMENT MIGHT SEEM TO RAISE DOUBTS ABOUT WHAT OWEN HAD SAID REGARDING THE AMERICAN COMMITMENT AND CLOSE ANGLO-AMERICAN COOPERATION (I.E., IT MIGHT APPEAR THE UNITED STATES WAS TAKING
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 LONDON 06371 02 OF 03 201214Z

A SECOND LOOK AT THE SITUATION). THE TRIP MIGHT ALSO ENCOURAGE THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS AND THE NATIONALISTS TO "UP THE ANTE". LATER IN THE CONVERSATION, OWEN RETURNED TO THIS POINT SUGGESTING THAT THE VICE PRESIDENT'S TRIP MIGHT MORE EFFECTIVELY BE MADE LATER IN THE PROCESS WHEN DEADLOCKS COULD USE BREAKING. BUT AGAIN HE REITERATED THAT HE DID NOT FEEL STRONGLY ON THESE POINTS AND ONLY WANTED TO PUT HIS INITIAL VIEWS ACROSS.

5. ON THE QUESTION OF THE US ROLE IN THE PROCESS AND US COSPONSORSHIP OF A CONFERENCE, OWEN SAID, "WE WON'T WAVER AT ALL ON THIS ONE." NYERERE HAS PROGRESSIVELY COOLED ON THE IDEA, HE SAID, AND NKOMO AND MUGABE APPEARED HOSTILE. BUT, OWEN WENT ON, THE BRITISH CABINET APPROVED THE INITIATIVE ONLY ON THE BASIS OF CLOSE US COOPERATION AND THE PROCESS WILL GET NOWHERE OTHERWISE. OWEN SAID HE EXPECTED SHORTLY A SIGNAL FROM THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS IN LUANDA "TO GO AHEAD". THE FIVE PRESIDENTS ARE "VERY POSITIVE" ABOUT THIS, HE ADDED. (OWEN LEFT DENNIS GRENNAN BEHIND IN LUANDA TO FOLLOW THE SUMMIT CONFERENCE. THE FCO EXPECTS GRENNAN'S REPORT SHORTLY. GRENNAN IS RETURNING TO LUSAKA ON KAUNDA'S AIRPLANE, WHICH OFFICIALS HERE HAVE INTERPRETED AS A FAVORABLE SIGN.) OWEN DISMISSED NKOMO'S NEGATIVE PUBLIC STANCE, SAYING THAT THE ZAPU LEADER HAD APPARENTLY CHANGED HIS TUNE IN HIS MOST RECENT STATEMENT IN PRAGUE. HE SAID PATRIOTIC FRONT STATEMENTS IN PUBLIC, INTENDED MAINLY FOR GUERRILLA CONSUMPTION, ARE BOUND TO BE HARSH. AND NKOMO TENDS TO BACK OFF FROM HIS BOMBAST WHEN CONFRONTED, OWEN CLAIMED.

6. ASKED ABOUT THE PROBLEM OF IMPLEMENTING AN AGREEMENT, OWEN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE FINAL STEPS LEADING TO

INDEPENDENCE WOULD BE A "TRICKY PERIOD". THERE WILL NEED TO BE A GREAT EFFORT TO MAINTAIN STABILITY. MUCH
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 LONDON 06371 02 OF 03 201214Z

DEPENDS ON GENUINE WHITE COOPERATION. "IT'S WHAT WORRIES MY COLLEAGUES MOST," HE SAID. AT THIS POINT, OWEN SUGGESTED THE US MIGHT CONSIDER, AS A DEMONSTRATION OF ITS COMMITMENT, PROVIDING LOGISTICAL SUPPORT TO A COMMONWEALTH FORCE IN RHODESIA DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD. HE SAID HE RECOGNIZED THERE WAS NO POSSIBILITY OF AMERICAN TROOPS, A POINT WHICH HE HAD STRESSED THROUGHOUT HIS TRIP. "I PROTECTED YOUR POSITION," HE WENT ON, "AND CONVINCED THE LEADERS THAT AMERICA IS NOT THE OLD

AMERICA." STILL, A LOGISTICAL ROLE MIGHT BE WORTH PURSUING.

7. ASKED IF HE CONTEMPLATED CIRCULATING A DRAFT PAPER TO GET DISCUSSIONS GOING ON A CONSTITUTION, OWEN REPLIED NEGATIVELY. NOTHING SHOULD BE WRITTEN DOWN, HE SAID, SUGGESTING THAT PRECISION MIGHT HAVE BEEN AN INTRINSIC FLAW IN THE KISSINGER APPROACH. THE INITIAL STAGE SHOULD BE ORAL; CONSULTATIONS SHOULD SOLICIT IDEAS FROM AFRICAN LEADERS, PARTICULARLY ON SUCH " TECHNICAL" QUESTIONS AS THE ELECTION MACHINERY, THE DEVELOPMENT FUND, AND THE ROLE OF A RESIDENT COMMISSIONER.

8. OWEN MADE SEVERAL OTHER POINTS IN THE CONVERSATION WORTH NOTING: A) CALLAGHAN IS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT OWEN'S APPROACH AND HAS GIVEN HIM FULL SUPPORT IN THE CABINET; B) THE FRANCHISE IN RHODESIA SHOULD BE OPEN, BUT OWEN IS SYMPATHETIC TO SOME FORM OF "BLOCKING MECHANISM" IN THE CONSTITUTION; C) OWEN FOUND MACHEL THE MOST IMPRESSIVE OF THE AFRICAN LEADERS HE MET; D) HE FOUND NETO NOT ENTIRELY COLORLESS BUT IN A WAY THE LEAST IMPRESSIVE OF THE PRESIDENTS; E) NETO PROBABLY DID NOT INSPIRE THE KATANGESE INCURSION INTO SHABA BUT LIKELY "CONNIVED" IN

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 LONDON 06371 03 OF 03 201215Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----201216Z 024732 /10

O R 201138Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2830
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

S E C R E T SECTION 03 OF 03 LONDON 06371

EXDIS

THE OPERATION; F) HE UNDERSTANDS GARBA WILL SHORTLY VISIT KINSHASA AND POSSIBLY LUANDA; G) OWEN WAS PLEASED WITH HIS SUCCESS IN THAT DAY'S EC MINISTERIAL STATEMENT WHICH INCLUDED A LINE SUPPORTING THE NIGERIAN MEDIATION EFFORT IN ZAIRE.

9. AS THE MEETING BROKE UP, OWEN MADE TWO ADDITIONAL COMMENTS. RETURNING TO THE POSSIBLE MONDALE TRIP, HE SAID HOW MUCH HE APPRECIATED THE SECRETARY'S QUICK ENDORSEMENT OF HIS OWN VISIT TO ANGOLA AND URGED THAT THE VICE PRESIDENT ALSO INCLUDE LUANDA ON HIS ITINERARY, ASSUMING THE US HAS RECOGNIZED ANGOLA BY THEN. OWEN NEXT SAID THAT BUILDING WHITE CONFIDENCE IS A VITAL FACTOR IN THE RHODESIAN EQUATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT FUND IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE IN THIS REGARD. "IT MIGHT HAVE TO BE MORE," HE CONCLUDED.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 LONDON 06371 03 OF 03 201215Z

10. COMMENT: OWEN WAS FRESH FROM HIS WELL RECEIVED STATEMENT IN THE HOUSE AND FEELING ON TOP. HIS THOUGHTS ON A LIAISON OFFICE IN SALISBURY AND HOW BEST TO DEVELOP A NEGOTIATING PROCESS WERE VAGUE, AS HE ADMITTED, BUT POINTED TO THE DIRECTION OF HIS THINKING. WE SUSPECT ALSO THAT HIS COMMENTS ABOUT THE TIMING OF AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF A CONFERENCE AND THE TIMING OF A POSSIBLE VICE PRESIDENTIAL TRIP TO AFRICA REFLECT VIEWS MORE FIRMLY HELD THAN HE INDICATED.

SPIERS

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 20-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977LONDON06371
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770137-0072
Format: TEL
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770439/aaaabhcg.tel
Line Count: 314
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 258f2aa2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2750964
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RHODESIA: OWEN'S PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS ON NEXT STEPS SUMMARY: 1) OWEN IS INCLINED TO ESTABLISHING A LI
TAGS: PFOR, RH, UK
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/258f2aa2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009